

REMARKS

The abstract and specification have been amended in order to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors contained therein. No new matter has been added.

In order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, the subject matter of Claim 2 has been combined with Claim 1 and represented as newly added Claim 6. Accordingly, Claims 1 and 2 have been canceled and the dependencies of Claims 3, 4 and 5 amended to be dependent on newly added Claim 6.

As requested by the Examiner, Applicants are enclosing herewith a proposed new Figure 8 which illustrates the globe shape at the top of each rib. No new matter has been added.

Claim 5 has been objected to for lacking a proper antecedent basis for "each rib". Newly presented Claim 6 now recites "a plurality of ribs". As such, it is respectfully submitted that there is proper antecedent basis for Claim 5 in newly presented Claim 6.

Claims 1 and 4 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of Sibbald. Claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of Sibbald and Chase. Claim 5 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of Sibbald, Chase and Nial et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these grounds of rejection and urge reconsideration in light of the following comments.

The presently claimed invention is directed to a golf tee comprising a stick pin having a tapered lower end for insertion in the ground, a ball-holding member for holding a ball placed on top of the stick pin and having a tubular form with a hollow part inside, a small hole provided at the bottom of the hollow part and a round loop base provided at an upper portion thereof, and a flexible connecting member having a lower end fixed with the stick pin and an upper end having a flange provided thereon. The flexible connecting member

slidably binds the ball-holding member to the stick pin. The connecting member is inserted into the hollow part through the small hole, the flange of the connecting member has notches for allowing air to pass upward between the flange and the ball-holding member and a plurality of ribs extend in the axial direction of the ball-holding member around the periphery thereof at a regular interval therebetween and protrude from the round loop base.

As discussed in the present application, due to the construction of the golf tee of the present invention, it is capable of reducing the amount of impact energy transmitted thereto, remaining in the ground after the striking of the ball and increasing the flight distance of a struck ball. It is respectfully submitted that the prior art cited by the Examiner does not disclose the presently claimed invention.

The Lee reference discloses a golf tee having a body and a stick pin for sticking to the ground. The body and stick pin are separated and formed to be connected by a clevis pin and a spring is provided in the inner portion of the body. Upon striking of a golf ball, the body bends in the progress direction of the golf ball to minimize the frictional resistance to the golf ball. The bent body is automatically restored in an original state and can be reused. As stated by the Examiner, the Lee reference does not disclose the provision of a flange having notches as required by the present invention. Additionally, this reference does not disclose the provision of a plurality of ribs extending in the axial direction of the ball-holding member being provided around the periphery thereof at a regular interval therebetween and protruding from a round loop base. As such, the secondary references cited by the Examiner must provide the motivation to one of ordinary skill in the art to make these modifications to the primary reference in order to present a showing of prima facie obviousness under 35 USC 103. It is respectfully submitted that the secondary references contain no such disclosure.

The Sibbald reference has been cited by the Examiner as disclosing a golf tee having notches to allow any dirt or foreign matter that may accumulate to be removed. However, the presently claimed invention requires that the flange of the connecting member have notches for allowing air to pass therethrough. There is no such equivalent structure in Sibbald as Sibbald does not disclose the provision of a flexible connecting member. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Sibbald in combination with Lee does not disclose the presently claimed invention.

The Chase reference has been cited by the Examiner as disclosing a golf tee comprising a ball holding member that has a plurality of ribs spaced at regular intervals. However, like the previously discussed references, there is no disclosure in this reference regarding the provision of a flange on a flexible connecting member and the flange having notches provided therein for allowing air to pass upward between the flange and the ball-holding member. Therefore, this reference, in combination with the previously discussed references, does not present a showing of prima facie obviousness under 35 USC 103 of newly presented Claim 6.

The Nial et al reference has been cited by the Examiner as disclosing that it is well known in the art of golf tees to provide rounded ends for the ribs in order to provide better support for the golf ball. However, as with the previously discussed references, there is no disclosure in this reference regarding the provision of notches in the flange of a connecting member for allowing air to pass upwardly therethrough. Therefore, Nial et al in combination with the previously discussed references does not even present a showing of prima facie obviousness under 35 USC 103 as an essential element of the present invention is omitted therefrom.

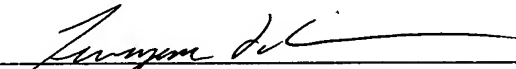
In the Lee reference cited by the Examiner, a stick pin 2 tends to come out of the ground while following the body 1 because air in the body cannot escape. Accordingly, the

spring 7 is used to apply a buffering force between the pin head 9 and suspending jaw 6. In contrast thereto, in the present invention, air provided in the hollow part H can escape through notches 4b1 provided in the flange of the connecting member. This creates a buffering effect and enables the stick pin 2 to remain in the ground while following the ball-holding member 3. None of the references disclose this feature.

The present invention also requires the formation of a plurality of ribs 3b along the axial direction of the ball-holding member 3 at regular intervals on the perimeter in a manner such that the ribs protrude from a round loop base 3c. This structure allows the ball to come into contact with the round loop base 3c when the tee is inserted into the ground and, when pressure is relieved from the golf ball, the ball returns to a state of being supported at the top of the ribs due to the restorative force thereof. None of the references cited by the Examiner disclose this feature either. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the currently presented claims clearly define an invention that is patentably distinguishable over the prior art cited by the Examiner.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the present application and to pass it to issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Terryence F. Chapman

TFC/smd

FLYNN, THIEL, BOUTELL	Dale H. Thiel	Reg. No. 24 323
& TANIS, P.C.	David G. Boutell	Reg. No. 25 072
2026 Rambling Road	Ronald J. Tanis	Reg. No. 22 724
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-1631	Terryence F. Chapman	Reg. No. 32 549
Phone: (269) 381-1156	Mark L. Maki	Reg. No. 36 589
Fax: (269) 381-5465	Liane L. Churney	Reg. No. 40 694
	Brian R. Tumm	Reg. No. 36 328
	Steven R. Thiel	Reg. No. 53 685
	Donald J. Wallace	Reg. No. 43 977
	Sidney B. Williams, Jr.	Reg. No. 24 949

Encl: Marked-Up Substitute Specification
Clean Substitute Specification
Replacement Abstract
Proposed New Figure 8
Postal Card

136.05/04

Amendments to the Drawings

A new Figure 8 is enclosed which illustrates the globe shape at the top of each rib. No new matter has been added.